

Welfare participation, by educational attainment

Public investment in education has many potential benefits for the Nation, including reduced reliance on welfare and public assistance programs among those who attain higher levels of education. The extent to which attaining higher levels of education reduces reliance on income maintenance programs is a measure of the social return of improving public education.

- In 1996, 25- to 34-year-olds who had dropped out of high school (those who had completed 9–11 years of school) were about three times as likely as high school completers who had not gone to college to receive income from Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) or public assistance income (12 versus 4 percent).
- Between 1986 and 1996, the percentages of 25- to 34-year-olds who received AFDC or public assistance remained similar for those who had dropped out of high school and those who had completed high school. During the same period, the percentage of 25- to 34-year-olds with 13–15 years of school who received AFDC or public assistance income increased slightly.
- In general, white and Hispanic 25- to 34-year-olds who had dropped out of high school were less likely than their black counterparts to receive AFDC or public assistance income between 1972 and 1996.

Percentage of 25- to 34-year-olds who received income from AFDC or other public assistance programs, by years of school completed and race/ethnicity: 1972–96

Year*	Years of school completed											
	All 25- to 34-year-olds						White		Black		Hispanic	
	All levels	Less than 9 years	9–11 years	12 years	13–15 years	16 years or more	9–11 years	12 years	9–11 years	12 years	9–11 years	12 years
1972	4.0	11.5	9.7	3.2	1.5	0.4	6.0	2.2	23.2	12.2	9.6	3.4
1973	3.9	11.7	10.3	3.3	1.7	0.6	5.6	2.1	25.9	12.1	16.2	5.5
1974	4.3	15.0	11.7	3.3	2.0	0.8	8.0	2.4	25.0	10.7	14.2	3.8
1975	3.6	11.3	11.0	3.3	1.5	0.3	7.0	2.4	27.8	10.0	10.6	3.4
1976	3.8	10.9	12.2	3.5	2.1	0.4	7.5	2.3	27.0	11.4	15.0	4.7
1977	3.9	11.7	12.0	3.9	2.1	0.3	8.0	2.6	26.4	12.4	13.1	6.6
1978	3.9	10.8	12.7	3.6	2.5	0.4	7.7	2.3	28.1	12.4	13.7	6.9
1979	3.9	12.4	12.8	3.8	2.1	0.6	7.9	2.5	26.8	12.0	15.1	5.4
1980	4.2	11.8	12.7	4.4	2.5	0.4	8.5	3.2	25.3	12.9	14.2	4.5
1981	4.4	11.5	13.6	4.6	2.7	0.5	9.5	2.9	29.1	14.9	13.3	5.0
1982	4.0	9.6	14.1	4.3	2.1	0.3	10.3	2.6	25.8	13.6	14.2	5.4
1983	4.2	11.4	14.7	4.3	2.5	0.3	10.7	2.6	26.8	13.4	15.5	5.2
1984	4.3	13.2	14.9	4.2	2.4	0.8	10.6	2.7	30.3	12.6	10.6	5.7
1985	4.2	11.8	14.0	4.4	2.6	0.4	9.5	3.1	30.7	11.7	13.2	5.2
1986	4.2	11.8	14.1	4.5	2.4	0.3	11.2	2.9	25.7	11.8	10.6	6.8
1987	4.2	13.2	12.5	4.5	2.5	0.3	7.8	2.9	28.5	12.4	10.7	5.9
1988	4.0	11.5	13.8	4.2	2.1	0.2	9.2	2.8	28.9	11.6	14.0	4.8
1989	3.9	8.8	13.4	4.1	2.4	0.4	8.5	2.9	30.3	10.9	12.0	4.4
1990	4.4	8.9	15.1	4.7	2.5	0.5	10.6	3.2	30.9	13.0	13.2	5.3
1991	5.0	11.4	16.0	5.5	3.1	0.5	11.9	4.0	28.6	13.1	15.1	6.0
1992	5.1	9.9	17.1	5.6	3.7	0.5	11.3	4.0	35.6	13.2	15.0	7.2
1993	5.3	9.6	16.2	6.3	3.7	0.4	11.5	3.8	31.3	15.9	14.6	8.2
1994	4.9	8.3	14.3	5.8	4.4	0.4	10.0	4.2	29.9	12.9	10.6	5.4
1995	4.4	9.1	12.4	5.2	4.1	0.3	7.8	3.7	29.9	11.6	9.6	5.6
1996	3.8	7.4	12.4	4.3	3.4	0.4	8.7	3.1	26.8	9.5	9.5	4.1

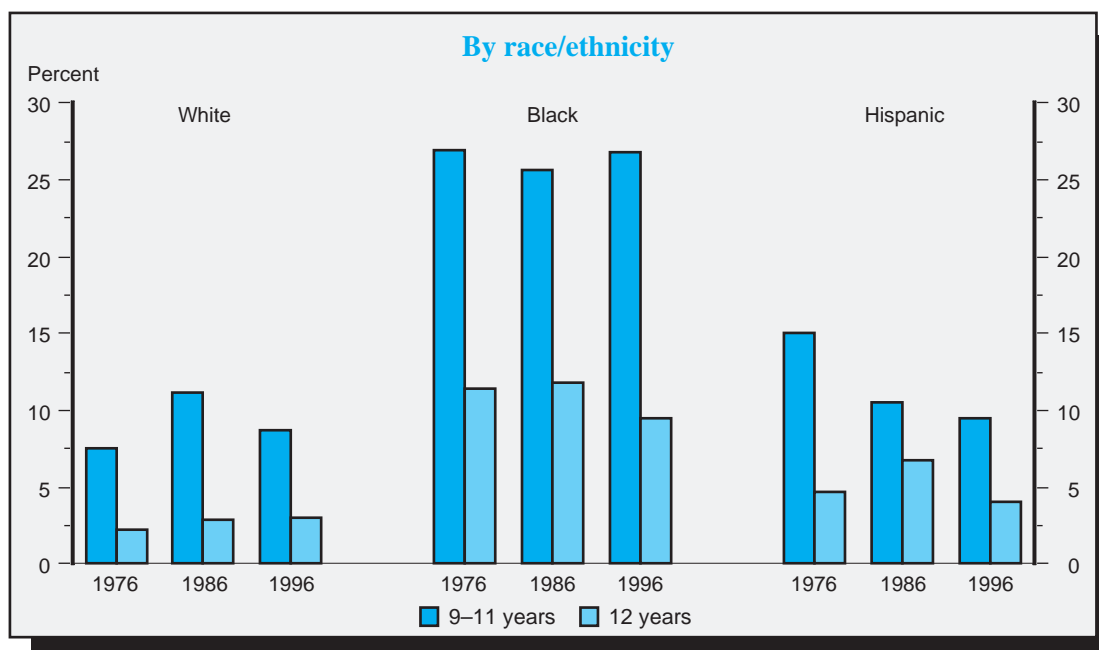
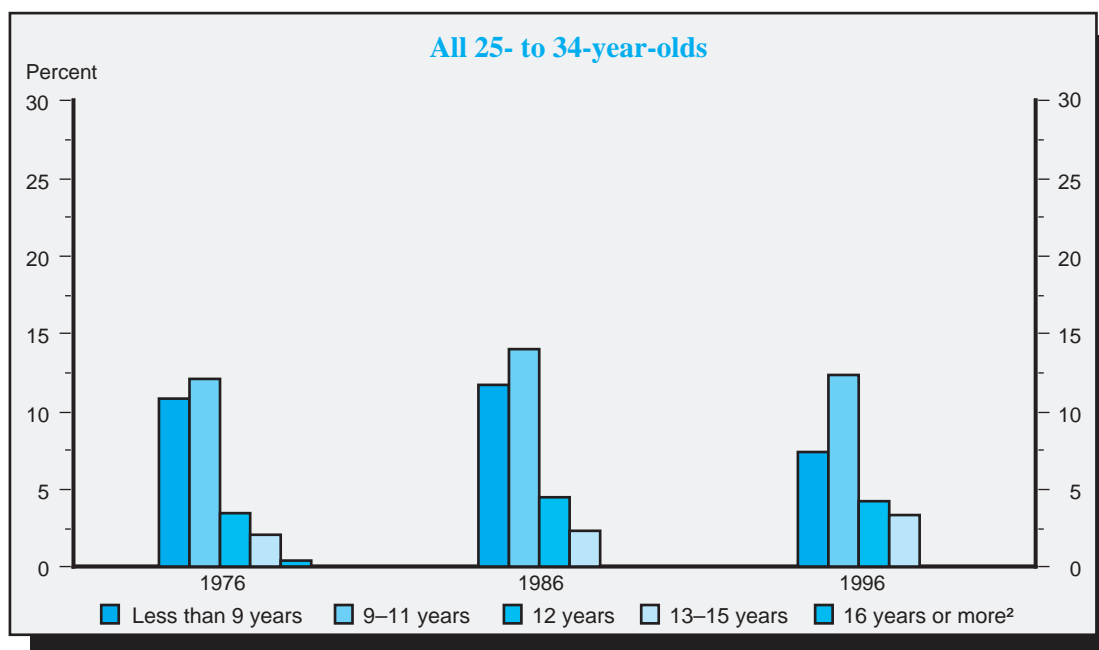
* Respondents were asked how much AFDC or public assistance income they received during the previous calendar year. The "Year" column reflects the calendar year rather than the survey year.

NOTE: The Current Population Survey (CPS) questions used to obtain educational attainment were changed in 1992. See the supplemental

note to *Indicator 22* for further discussion. Included in "All 25- to 34-year-olds" but not shown separately are those from other racial/ethnic groups.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, March Current Population Surveys.

Percentage of 25- to 34-year-olds who received income from AFDC or other public assistance programs, by years of school completed: 1976, 1986, and 1996¹



¹ Respondents were asked how much AFDC or public assistance income they received during the previous calendar year. The "Year" labels on the graphs reflect the calendar year rather than the survey year.

² In 1986 and 1996, the percentages of 25- to 34-year-olds who had completed 16 or more years of school and had received AFDC or public assistance income were less than 1.0; therefore, the percentages are not presented in the graph.

NOTE: The Current Population Survey (CPS) questions used to obtain educational attainment were changed in 1992. See the supplemental note to *Indicator 22* for further discussion.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, March Current Population Surveys.

Table S34 Standard errors for the text table in *Indicator 34*

Year	Years of school completed											
	All 25- to 34-year-olds						White		Black		Hispanic	
	All	Less than	9-11	12	13-15	16 years	9-11	12	9-11	12	9-11	12
	levels	9 years	years	years	years	or more	years	years	years	years	years	years
1972	0.2	0.9	0.6	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.6	0.2	2.2	1.4	2.9	1.4
1973	0.2	0.9	0.6	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.6	0.2	2.4	1.3	3.9	1.7
1974	0.2	1.0	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.7	0.2	2.4	1.2	3.5	1.5
1975	0.1	1.1	0.7	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.7	0.2	2.6	1.1	3.1	1.4
1976	0.2	1.0	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.7	0.2	2.4	1.2	3.4	1.6
1977	0.2	1.0	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.7	0.2	2.5	1.3	3.2	1.8
1978	0.1	1.0	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.8	0.2	2.4	1.2	3.5	1.8
1979	0.1	1.0	0.8	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.8	0.2	2.4	1.2	3.2	1.5
1980	0.2	1.1	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.8	0.2	2.4	1.2	3.3	1.4
1981	0.2	1.1	0.8	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.9	0.2	2.7	1.3	3.1	1.3
1982	0.1	1.1	0.8	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.9	0.2	2.5	1.2	3.1	1.4
1983	0.2	1.0	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.9	0.2	2.5	1.1	2.7	1.2
1984	0.2	1.1	0.9	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.9	0.2	2.6	1.1	2.1	1.1
1985	0.1	1.2	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.9	0.2	2.7	1.0	2.2	1.0
1986	0.1	1.1	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.9	0.2	2.4	1.0	2.0	1.1
1987	0.2	1.1	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.8	0.2	2.7	1.1	2.3	1.2
1988	0.1	1.3	0.8	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.9	0.2	2.6	1.0	2.2	1.0
1989	0.1	1.1	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.8	0.2	2.7	1.0	2.0	0.9
1990	0.2	1.0	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.9	0.2	2.6	1.1	1.9	1.0
1991	0.2	1.0	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.1	1.0	0.3	2.5	1.1	2.1	1.1
1992	0.2	1.2	0.9	0.3	0.3	0.1	1.1	0.3	3.2	1.3	2.4	1.3
1993	0.2	1.1	0.9	0.3	0.3	0.1	1.1	0.3	3.1	1.4	2.1	1.3
1994	0.2	1.1	0.9	0.3	0.3	0.1	1.1	0.3	3.2	1.3	1.8	1.1
1995	0.2	1.1	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.9	0.3	2.9	1.2	1.2	0.8
1996	0.1	1.0	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.1	1.0	0.3	2.8	1.1	1.2	0.7

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, March Current Population Surveys.